# Marketing strategies must adapt to global tariff challenges



The landscape of global marketing is undergoing a profound transformation as escalating tariffs imposed under the Trump administration disrupt previously stable international trade conditions. Kevin Freedman, CEO and founder of Freedman International, outlines the challenges and strategies for marketers to navigate this turbulent environment, where traditional approaches no longer suffice.

Tariffs—taxes levied on imported goods to shield domestic industries or adjust trade imbalances—have surged, with the United States instituting a minimum 10% tariff on most imports alongside higher rates targeted at specific countries. This has triggered widespread effects across global commerce, contributing to supply chain disruptions, increased costs for raw materials and finished goods, and imbalances in market supply and demand. The International Monetary Fund has forecasted a significant slowdown in global economic growth, with the US economy predicted to suffer the most among advanced economies.

For marketers, the economic implications are pronounced. Rising costs compress profit margins, compelling brands to deliberate over absorbing expenses, transferring costs to consumers, or scaling back investments. These decisions threaten the benefits once enjoyed through global scale and uniformity.

Historically, global marketing strategies leaned heavily on consistency—deploying standardized campaigns, unified messaging, and uniform product offerings worldwide. The imposition of tariffs, however, has rendered such approaches untenable. Freedman observes that “the same product can now have radically different costs, availability, and competitive positioning depending on where it’s sold.” Supply interruptions exacerbate unpredictability, making long-term planning increasingly precarious.

As a result, marketing imperatives are shifting from consistency-first to relevance-first frameworks. Brands are advised to customise their strategies in accordance with local market conditions, adapting pricing structures, product features, and messaging to reflect each market’s economic realities and cultural specificities. This approach involves not only translation but culturally nuanced content creation and the cultivation of partnerships with local influencers and creators to forge authentic connections.

Europe is portrayed as an emerging refuge for cost-efficient growth amid the global tariff upheaval. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, has highlighted European nations' eagerness to collaborate in pursuit of trade stability and reliable partnerships. While European exporters are not immune to the challenges posed by US tariffs, the region’s resilience and commitment to diversifying trade avenues bolster its appeal as a comparatively stable market.

To thrive amid volatility, marketers must embrace agility and localisation as prerequisites rather than optional extras. Freedman stresses the importance of implementing modular campaign assets, flexible media buying, and real-time coordination between creative and commercial teams. The utilisation of AI-powered tools is cited as instrumental in detecting shifts in consumer demand, supply conditions, and market sentiment, enabling rapid response without protracted approval cycles.

Freedman offers strategic guidance for marketing leaders adapting to this new normal:

* Centre local relevance by developing agile models to facilitate swift creation and deployment of localised campaigns.
* Continually assess and optimise international marketing operations to enhance responsiveness to rapid changes and local market nuances.
* Employ value-based messaging tailored to individual markets, emphasising product durability, exclusivity, and long-term value to justify potential price increases.
* Leverage digital channels for quick adjustments in messaging, pricing, and creative content, supported by shortened planning cycles and real-time data.
* Forge partnerships with local creators, influencers, and businesses to navigate regulatory environments and build authentic consumer engagement.

Freedman concludes that tariffs have conclusively ended “business as usual” in global marketing, with the traditional playbook undergoing real-time rewriting. Brands that successfully adapt their strategies in response to these conditions will be positioned to lead the future of international marketing.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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2. <https://taxfoundation.org/research/all/federal/trump-tariffs-trade-war/> - This URL corroborates the assertion that tariffs have increased federal tax revenues and discusses the retaliatory measures from trading partners such as China, Canada, and the EU, which affect U.S. exports and GDP. It also provides insight into the broad scale of goods impacted by Trump's tariffs.
3. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/04/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-declares-national-emergency-to-increase-our-competitive-edge-protect-our-sovereignty-and-strengthen-our-national-and-economic-security/> - This URL confirms President Trump’s imposition of a minimum 10% tariff on all U.S. imports, which took effect on April 5, 2025, and notes the higher rates applied to specific countries. It underscores the administration's stance on trade and economic policy.
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